Standing Firm in Grace

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[0:00] We're going to just read the whole fifth chapter, starting there in verse number one. And Peter says this, So he's writing to these pastors, to these bishops, and reminding them of what God has called them to do.

And Peter's saying, hey, I'm in the same boat as you, and here's what God wants us to do. Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly, not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind, neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being an ensample to the flock.
And when the chief shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.
So Peter's reminding them, hey, this is not your church. If you're a pastor in this church who he's writing to, it's not your church.
This is God's church. The pastor that stands in the pulpit is just the under-shepherd. This is Jesus' church, and we are leading it in that way. That's what Peter's encouraging. Verse number five, And he's not just talking about age, by the way, there.
We mentioned that last time. He's talking about mature Christians with younger Christians. And we need to be able to mentor and help others along. He says, What a picture that God's almost kind of stiff-arming you.
[1:28] We're going to be proud people. God says, I don't want anything to do with that. So we're coming into our text now, kind of building off of this. He's talking to pastors in the first part, really. But now he's kind of talking to everybody within the church.

Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time.
Casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you.
Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour. Whom resists steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.
But the God of all grace, who hath called you unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that you have suffered a while, make you perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you.
And Peter just can't handle it anymore. And this is what he has to say, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. And then sometimes we skip over these kind of, these closing verses, but there's a lot of good truth in here.
[2:32] He says this, by Salvanus, a faithful brother unto you, as I suppose, I have written briefly, exhorting and testifying, that this is the true grace of God wherein you stand.

The church that is at Babylon, elected together with you, saluteth you, and so doth Marcus, my son, greet ye one another with a kiss of charity. Peace be with you, all that are in Christ Jesus.
Amen. So Peter's kind of bringing this book to a close. And he started out with this truth that we have, he says, peace. Peace unto you that are spread abroad. But now he's reminding us of this. We have the grace that we can stand in. And so that's kind of where he brings, he wants us to understand this truth, that we can stand firm in the grace of God. Because it's a solid rock to stand on. It's not shifting like the culture.
Peter's writing to these people that are culture and persecution. All these things are changing all the time. But the grace of God is firm. And we can stand and we can stake our life to it. And so that's what we're going to see here this evening.
[3:28] Let's go to the Lord in prayer and ask him to help our time together. Father, thank you for this opportunity. You've allowed us to gather in your house once again. Thank you for the wonderful service this morning. Lord, thank you for the great reminders and song tonight. But I pray you would just help our minds just to kind of focus on what you have for us here in these next few moments.

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Lord, I pray that we wouldn't just hear the truth. That we would take it. We would apply it. Lord, if there's somebody here that doesn't know you as their Savior. Lord, I pray that tonight would be that night. And Lord, you would help me. I'd be a help to your people.
And we ask this in Christ's name. Amen. Thank you for standing. May be seated. We got any road trip lovers here? Like to go on a road trip?
I mean, I like the thought of it. I like the idea of it. And it's very exciting sometimes. And you get everything packed up. And you're ready to go. And I mean, you have your coffee.
Because you can't go on a road trip without coffee. And you have snacks. Because you've got to have snacks. Maybe you've got a playlist or whatever it is. And, you know, listen to all the Disney songs that you can handle on the way. Or whatever it might be.
[4:28] Everybody seems to be in a good mood. Sometimes we don't even make it to the car. But if we make it to the car in a good mood, about 30 minutes later, somebody inevitably asks, Are we there yet?

No, this is a 10-hour drive. Don't ask me that again. Somebody else is complaining about being hungry, even though we just ate a snack. Even though we just picked it up. Sometimes on the way out, Hey, we're going to pick a snack up.
And so we can make it to lunchtime, whenever that might be. And then as the driver generally in our family, I start calculating how far I can make it without stopping. I mean, because I was just like, The further I can make it, the better I feel about myself.
And I'm like, you know, I can just tell them, Hey, we're going to make it right here. And at the beginning of this trip, you're thinking how exciting this trip is going to be. But sometimes just halfway in the car, and sometimes even just getting there, all you can think about is just, I want to be home. I want to be in my bed. I want to sleep on my own pillow. And the idea is that it's one thing to begin a journey, but sometimes it's a whole different animal to keep going when the journey becomes difficult. When it doesn't seem to be going exactly how you planned.
[5:33] And that's not just true when it comes to a road trip in the car with your family. I think it can be especially true when it comes to following Jesus. Because when you first come to the knowledge of Christ and realize what he did for you on the cross of Calvary, I mean, it's hard to keep that in.

That God himself would love me that much. A sinner, and he's not willing just to give me heaven, but actually a life worth living and joy and peace and really all the things I was searching for before I found Christ.
I love the song Miss Tiffany sang. It just reminds us when you find Christ, that's when you find it all. And that joy, that tremendous joy in knowing your sins are forgiven, in knowing that you belong to him, and trusting in the promises of eternal life.
But here's the reality. Life happens. It's not that salvation loses its specialness, but the reality is that disappointments are gonna come.
Even for Christians, there are unexpected burdens. There's trials that we never imagined we'd face. We see other people, we see it on the news, and we think, that would never happen to me. But sometimes we walk through that trial.
[6:42] We walk through that health diagnosis. We walk through that loss of a loved one, or whatever it may be. And sometimes, and many times, at some point in the life, following Jesus is much harder than we anticipated.

So the question is, how do we keep going when that happens? How do we continue to press forward? Because that's who Peter is writing to. He's writing to a group of believers that would have come to the knowledge of Christ.
I mean, this is the best news ever, and it is. But then, because of the death of Christ, and the things that were taking place, and the government situation of the day in Rome, I mean, persecution is spreading like wildfire.
And really, Peter is writing to them, these young believers facing opposition because of their faith. And that's why we've seen throughout these five chapters, and he reminds them, hey, listen, this world is not your home.
That we can't look around at the things around us and be focused on that. He reminds them over and over that they are strangers, they are pilgrims, they are exiles living in a foreign land. And they were suffering.
[7:45] And Peter wanted them to understand this truth, and we've seen it take place in almost every single chapter, that their circumstances, they were difficult, but their future was secure.

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And that's something that we can hold on today as well. Because even in this room, I know things that are going on. We have the prayer list back there, and we pray for these things. Listen, it doesn't mean life is great right now. It doesn't mean everything's just rosy, and you have no problems.
But we can know this. We know who holds tomorrow. We may not know everything about the future, but one day we're going to see him, the Bible says. And when we see him, we shall be like him. And I love that song.
What a day that will be. When my Savior I shall see. When I look upon his face. And that's kind of what Peter is reminding him of this truth. He wanted them to latch on to that.
Why? Because their hope was not rooted in their circumstances. And sometimes we think it's not in our own life. But I think if we're not careful, we don't even realize sometimes what our hope just attaches to in this world.
[8:47] It's not bad things. But our hope can't be in our spouse. It can't be in our job. It can't be in our bank account. Because at some point, some of those things, we may lose them. We may not be able to take it all the way how we envisioned for it to be.

And so what Peter's been doing in these short chapters here is he's been showing us what it looks like to live with this hope that Jesus is alive, that Jesus loves you, and that Jesus is coming back.
And so now as he's bringing this letter to a close, he doesn't promise them, now, hey, life's about to get easier. You've been through the thick of it and it's got to get better. Anybody ever say that?
You know, I think to myself, it's got to get better, right? And sometimes I ask the Lord, Lord, it's got to get better, right? I mean, Lord, this has to be the end of the trial, doesn't it? But instead, Peter doesn't do that.
He just, he continually reminds them that God who's been faithful all along is going to continue to be faithful. And come what may, we need to keep trusting him.
[9:50] Because he has proven himself time and time and time again. That that's who God is. Faithfulness is not a characteristic, it is who he is. It is how he operates.

And really the big idea of these closing verses is this thought that God cares for us. And because he cares for us and he's called us to this eternal glory, he didn't call us for this life.
No, he's preparing a place for us. Hey, we're to live with him forever. Because those things are true, we can stand firm in the grace no matter what trial comes across our desk.
That's kind of really the thought that we see here. So here's the question. How can we stand firm in this grace, this true grace, as Peter says in the closing verses? I think it gives us four important reminders, four important ways that we can stand.
Number one, we must humble ourselves before God. We see that in verse number six and then there in verse number seven. He says, humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God that he, that God may exalt you in due time.
[10:54] In our previous message, which would have been a little over a month ago or so, Peter reminded them, especially in verse number five, of the importance of humility within the church, within the body of believers.

And he's showing us in that verse how we need to have that in our relationships with one another. But now in verse number six, he's emphasizing that same humility in our relationship with God.
Really the thought is this, that humility should be a way of life for the believer. Why? Because Jesus is our example and that's how he lived. He was humble. He had showed humility to his disciples and to others.
He didn't kind of pull the trump card and say, hey, well I'm the leader, I'm the boss, so y'all listen to me. No, he loved them. He washed their feet. He served them. He didn't come to be ministered unto, he came to minister.
And he's calling us to do the same. And so now what Peter says is, he's saying, listen, if you're going to really be able to humble yourselves to other people, you've got to make sure that you're humbling yourselves under the mighty hand of God.
[11:58] That God is the one that you are in submission to. See that expression, the mighty hand of God, it reminds us of his power. It reminds us of his sovereign authority.

Think about maybe when God delivered Israel from Egypt. They were enslaved, they were helpless, there was nothing they could do to free themselves. And when Moses tried to free them the first time, he got a little bit ahead of God's schedule and it seemed that it just caused more problems.

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Now they didn't even get straw for their bricks, they had to figure that out themselves. But what happened there when you read the book of Exodus? God intervened with his mighty hand. Moses showed up and said, let my people go, and he said, not going to happen.
Well guess what? God kept showing himself mighty and mighty and mighty and Peter reminds them, he reminds these suffering believers that the same mighty hand of God is still at work in their lives.
I don't want to remind us today too. Listen, Exodus was a long time ago, but it's the same God. It's the same mighty power. He hasn't lost his power. He's not saying, well it's 2026, I can't do certain things.
[13:06] No, God can do all things. There's nothing that he cannot do and we need to be reminded and we need to live like that's true. But here's what makes that command difficult.

When he says, exalt yourselves under the mighty hand of God. Sometimes God's mighty hand doesn't remove the circumstances that we're facing. And I have conversations with God about these things because I know he's all powerful.
And we see it in scripture and we see some things that he does and I say, Lord, would you please take care of this? Lord, would you please remove it? And lo and behold, he doesn't. See, sometimes he allows us to remain in that difficult situation.
And that's where humility becomes absolutely necessary. Because here's what a humble life before God says. I don't understand what you're doing, Lord. I don't understand everything that I'm facing, but here's what I know, Lord.
Lord, I trust you. That's what our life has to say. And that's real easy to say up here from a pulpit. I'll be honest, it's real easy to say. It's really hard to live that.
[14:11] Because we're there in places in our life. And you're gonna walk through something. I'm not trying to be the bearer of bad news, but there's gonna come a place in your life where you're just gonna have no answers. And it seems like maybe your prayers aren't being answered. Let me just remind you, he hears.

And God is in control. And God knows what he's doing. And here's the thing that we have to understand about this verse. That he may exalt you in due time. I'd imagine many of you are like me.
And I struggle with this. That I know God's powerful. I know that he's able. But I'd really appreciate it sometimes if he'd get on my schedule. Am I the only one?
And I don't think there's anything wrong with that per se. But that's why he reminds us to take these cares. We're gonna get there in a second. Is that's kind of how we're wired. That's kind of how our world is wired.
Hey, if you're putting in the work and you're putting in the effort, then you should be rewarded for it. But the reward many times is not that the situation's removed. Here's what the reward is, that we may know him.
[15:12] That's what God is trying to get. Here's what Paul told us in Philippians, that I may know him and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of his suffering be made conformable unto his death. Here's what Paul was saying.

Listen, I'll go through anything. I'll die if I know Christ more. That's a pretty bold statement. But we look at the apostle Paul and we wonder why he was so effective because that's how he lived his life.
He knew I'm just a vessel. I'm just a mouthpiece. I'm just a conduit for God and I'm gonna let God in his time get work in my life.
Because there had to be times in Paul's life, I'm gonna ask him face to face one day. Like Paul, when you were in prison, didn't you pray, Lord, get me out of this place? Now we see that God used him in a prison.
There was another man in the Bible God used greatly in a prison. His name was Joseph. I mean, you talk about somebody that went through the ringer, betrayed by his brothers, sold into slavery because, you know, at least make some money off of him instead of just killing him.
[16:10] I mean, you talk about dysfunctional family. Joseph's family, the patriarchs of Israel, pretty dysfunctional. Finally gets to Egypt. He's there. He's a hard worker.

He's risen to power in Potiphar's house. Potiphar's wife makes advances on him. He's falsely accused. I personally believe Potiphar knew his wife was lying because he would have killed him in

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the first place.
I mean, he had that kind of authority. He said, well, let's just put him in prison. He's thrown into prison. They're in the prison. He's doing such a good job. The prison guards are like, hey, actually, I'm gonna give you my job.
You're just gonna run this prison. And for years, his circumstances seemed to move the opposite direction of God's promises. I mean, he had these dreams.
He had these dreams that one day his brothers are gonna bow to him and all these things are gonna happen. And every time he turned the corner, it seemed like he was getting further and further and further away from his dreams. And he finally gets to the moment where, hey, it seems like it's gonna happen.
[17:05] He interprets his dream and he tells the baker and the butler, hey, when you talk to Pharaoh tomorrow, remember me. We'll never forget you. One day. They forgot him. I mean, they couldn't remember that this guy just interpreted all the dreams.

But here's what we see in the life of Joseph. God never forgot him. And at the right time, at the time when the famine was gonna come, when the world needed a leader, when somebody that was willing to be used and somebody that was willing to yield their life to God, no matter what comes, no matter what circumstance, Joseph was there and God exalted him.
And he put him in charge. Really, Pharaoh was just kind of like a figurehead. Joseph was running the world at that time. And he told his brothers, listen, you thought this for evil. You meant this for evil, but God meant it for good to save much people alive.
And I just wanna remind us, and that's kind of what Peter's doing here, that God's delays in your life are not evidence of God's neglect. Sometimes we think, God, where are you?
Hey, don't you know what's going on? Why are you neglecting me? Peter's reminding him, he's not. But you stay under the mighty hand of God. Yes, sometimes it hurts. Sometimes it doesn't make sense.
[18:21] But he knows what he's doing. Look back on your life. Look at the track record. God has never failed you. God has never messed up. Look at verse number seven, what he reminds us.

Casting all your care upon him. Why? For he careth for you. These aren't disconnected verses. Verse number six, and then the following verse.
I'm not gonna say the number. Verse number seven. Sometimes we wanna disconnect them. But here's what Peter is showing us.
He shows us what humility before God looks like in everyday life. Because sometimes we want the answer. And here's what we just need to do. We just need to give it to the Lord. Sometimes I go to the Lord, my prayer is, Lord, I need an answer here.
I need an answer here. They're asking me this. I need to know what to do. Lord, I need an answer and answer and answer. Here's sometimes what we need to do. Lord, I'm just giving this to you. Lord, would you just take this? Lord, I can't carry this anymore.
[19:20] In fact, we were never meant to carry many of the burdens that we are carrying in our life right now. I'd imagine even in a room right now tonight, there's probably burdens that we have in our life that we have no reason to carry.

Because God says, give them to me. He's the burden bearer. He's the one that's gonna carry it. Listen, humility is not just accepting God's authority. It's depending on his care.
It's giving it to him and letting him control your life. And I love this little word in here, all. Casting all your care upon him.
You know, there's some cares I wanna give to the Lord. And there's some cares I just wanna keep as a pet. So I can talk about it. And I can tell other people about it. And tell them how I'm worrying about this.
Okay. I think we're like that sometimes. And I'm thankful for good friends when I start complaining and telling them all my cares. They say, well, have you told the Lord about that?
[20:20] Well, I'm keeping this one. This is my care. No, I'm pretty sure he says, cast all your cares. Those burdens you carry for your family, cast them on him.

You know what I found out? God loves my family more than I love my family. There's things that I carry sometimes as the pastor. The Lord says, why don't you just give those to me? He's already reminded me in the first part of this chapter, I'm not the shepherd of this church.

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I'm just the under shepherd. I'm just the one that got his place in this certain position. Maybe you're dealing with financial pressures or health concerns or things, whatever keeps you awake at night. Here's what Peter says, cast all those on him. Why are you carrying them? If you're gonna humble yourselves, you're saying, Lord, I trust you. And if you trust him, then you're gonna cast all your cares on him.
Not name him and put a leash on him and carry him everywhere you go. I think sometimes we're prone to think that way. I mean, you notice it's the same idea that Jesus talks about in the Sermon on the Mount, that we tend to worry a lot.
[21:21] You know what worry is? It's the sin of distrusting God. That's a hard way to say it, but that's what it is. Because here's what Jesus said, take no thought. He said, don't worry about it.

If you wanna worry about something, here's what you should worry about. Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. Why don't you put all your effort on that and let God take care of everything else? That's really what Jesus is saying.
That's the same thing Peter is saying here. And we can do that. We can give him everything we have because we know this to be true. If we know him as our savior, he cares for you.
We just sing it. It's not just a little chorus. No, it's a biblical truth. He cares for you. Not just a little bit. Look at the cross.
Shows you how much he cares. He's willing to go all the way to death for you. See, the God whose mighty hand rules over creation who the Bible says, by him all things consist.
[22:19] Everything we know is being held together by Jesus Christ. He cares about that thing in your life right now. And here's what he says.

Why don't you give it to me? Why are you carrying that around? Why don't you just let it go? See, when we really stop and think about it, we can surrender to God.
We can surrender our cares to him because we can trust his heart. That's what Peter's been showing us throughout this little epistle. But trusting God does not mean that we can become spiritually careless.
Sometimes you ever met somebody that's carefree and you think, they probably should care a little bit more about that. You know, sometimes when they're little kids, you're thinking, man, they just kind of, oh, it doesn't matter. Nothing's going wrong in the world.
Sometimes Christians try to live their life like that. We can't be spiritually careless because while we have a heavenly Father who cares for us, Peter reminds us in verse number eight, we have a spiritual enemy who opposes us.
[23:20] So here's how we can stand firm in the grace of God. We need to stand firm against the enemy. Notice how he begins verse number eight. He says this, be sober, be vigilant, these aren't good ideas.

This isn't solid advice. These are commands from the word of God that he wants us to see. Peter is telling us this, that as believers, we are to think clearly.
We are to remain spiritually alert. We are to recognize that we are involved in a spiritual battle. It's coming off the hills of verse number seven where he told us to cast our cares and now he tells us to remain watchful.
In other words, verse number eight is reminding us this in the very first part is depending on God doesn't mean that we can just disengage from the battle. No, we're going to be in a battle. I know this is not going to be the best news.
We're going to be in the battle until we see Jesus Christ face to face. As long as we're drawing breath, we have an enemy. We are in a spiritual battle. And here's what Peter's saying.
[24:26] While we trust him, we must remain alert. Be sober, be vigilant. Why? Because your adversary, the devil, he walketh about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.

Peter's not trying to get us to focus on our enemy per se. We're not to become obsessed with the adversary and how he operates. But what he's trying to really show us is how to keep us from being careless about him.
Because if we're careless, we'll see this here in a second, we are no match. We are no match for our adversary in our own strength. Now, our adversary is no match for Jesus Christ.
Absolutely not. I mean, he has defeated him once and for all. He knows he's losing. He knows the battle's been lost. But he's going to try to take everybody down with him while he can. And I think we need to have the same balance in our life that Peter's trying to strike a chord here.

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That everything bad in our life is not the devil's fault. I think some people can begin to blame everything that goes wrong with the devil. They have a flat tire.
[25:38] Must be Satan. I mean, they oversleep. The devil's really fighting me today. Here's an idea. Set an alarm. I know I'm trying to be a little silly because sometimes we try to blame everything on him.

We try to overemphasize our enemy. We shouldn't do that. Peter says we have an adversary and his desire is destructive, but he's not telling us that to kind of scare us.
He's telling that to strengthen our faith. That we need to keep trusting God, the one that's already won the battle. Why? Because one of the ways that our enemy works is through the very trials that he has talked about here.
Some of the ways that the enemy works is through the very trials that maybe you're walking through right now. Yes, God allows the trials, but here's what our mind can start thinking and the enemy gets in there.
Well, does God really care? I mean, if God really loved you, why would he let that happen to you? Does God, why would he allow something so awful in your life?
[26:43] Is following Jesus really worth it if this is what you get? That's a way that the enemy works. And in verse number nine, Peter doesn't just say we need to watch out for him.

No, he reminds us we need to resist him. He says this, whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.
How do we resist the devil? Well, he tells us right here that we need to be grounded in the truth of God's word. We need to be grounded about our faith in Jesus Christ, not in trusting our own strength.
We have to know what we believe. We have to remain steadfast in the faith. Because there's gonna be times where our feelings don't match up with the truth of the word of God. Sometimes, I'm sure you found this out, our feelings are great liars.
Because they're not true. You know what's true? The word of God. And when the enemy comes, you know what we need to be equipped with? The word of God. You remember when Jesus was tempted in the wilderness?
[27:47] You know what his weapon was? It is written, thus saith the Lord. And he quoted the scripture because that is what God has given us. And he rooted his faith in the word of God.

I mean, I think about the man writing this book. Remember the night that Jesus Christ was betrayed? Peter was pretty confident in himself. You go to the upper room in John chapter 13, Jesus starts telling him, I'm leaving.
And Peter said, absolutely not. I don't think so. You're not leaving us. And he said, no, this is what's gonna happen. And they're gonna, the son of man's gonna be betrayed. He's gonna be turned over into the chief priest's hands and they're gonna kill him.
And Peter basically said, over my dead body. That's what he said. He said, I'll die for you, Lord. And Jesus said, before this night's over, Peter, you're gonna deny me three times.
And Peter scoffed at that. You know why he did? Because he was confident in himself. He was certain that he would never deny the Lord. But when the pressure came, Peter fell asleep in the garden when he should have been praying.
[28:55] He acted impulsively when he should have listened. And eventually, he denied the Lord just as he promised he never would. So Peter's writing this and he's saying, listen, if you're gonna resist him, you gotta be grounded in his truth, in his word.

Because when you're confident in yourself, you are going to crash and burn. That's what Peter is saying. He knew what it was like to underestimate the spiritual danger and the power that our enemy has.
But he also knew what it was like to be restored by the grace of God. And he's saying, that's what you gotta stand firm in. Resist by the faith of the word of God. And here's the lesson we can take away. Before we can stand firmly against the enemy, we have to bow humbly before God.
We have to put ourselves under the mighty hand of God. We have to cast our cares. We have to remain watchful. We have to remain vigilant and sober and clear-minded. And when we do that and we're grounded in the word of God, we can stand.
And that's what he's reminding us here. And at the very end of verse number nine, he gives us another little tidbit of encouragement. He says, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished

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in your brethren that are in the world.
[30:07] Here's what Peter says there at the end of the verse. You're not the only one facing the battle. Which is an encouragement. Because you know what? If we're not careful, when trials, when temptations come, when difficulties come in our life, we begin to have this complex that we're the only person going through it.

We turn into Eeyore from Winnie the Pooh. That everything is wrong in our life and nobody else has it as bad as I have it. You know, that's a wonderful reason to be plugged into a local church family. Because we can look around and we can see that we're not the only ones going through it. And that we're trying to press forward by the grace of God. See, sometimes suffering makes us feel like we're isolated.
We begin to think, I have to be the only one that ever struggles with this. Peter says, no you're not. He says, this happens all over. What the Bible tells us, Paul tells in Corinthians, that our struggles, they're common to man.
You think, I'm the only one? Peter says, no. Paul says, absolutely not. We all struggle with these things. And listen, there are brothers and sisters in this room. There's brothers and sisters in Christ around this world that are facing similar trials.
[31:13] And it ought to encourage us. It ought to move us to pray one for another. That's why we build relationships one with another. So we can pray one for another. I'm thankful when people pray for me as you are.

And you come in the next service and somebody says, hey, I've been praying for you. That's what Peter's saying. We should be moved because we know we're all facing it. We all know we're in the battle. Listen, we need to encourage each other in the battle.
We can't act like everything's just rosy all the time and we have no problems. No, life is hard. We're going to face it. And it reminds us that we need the fellowship of one another. So Peter says, this is of the utmost importance.
Let me ask you, are you spiritually alert? Well, how do you stay alert? Well, here's a good way. Get in the Word of God. Because if we're going to remain steadfast in His Word, we need to know His Word.
Because the enemy is coming. And he usually doesn't say, hey, I'm coming tomorrow at 3.30 p.m. No, we have to be ready for Him. We don't know how He's going to attack and we don't want to be so far away.
[32:19] We don't need to treat God in prayer like 911. We only call Him when we need Him. No, we need to have this intimate relationship that we can come boldly before the throne of grace. And when we come, the Bible tells us there in Hebrews 4 that when we go there, here's what we're going to find.

Help. We're connected to Him. Are you guarding your heart? Because if we're just careless about it, the enemy's going to destroy us.
Every time I read this verse, every time I read verse number 8, I just picture those poor little antelope in Africa. They look like they're just having a great day on the safari, on the savannah. And they're just hopping around.
You know, they're just doing their little thing. And you hear that David Attenborough or whatever that guy's name is that does all those things. He's like, and here's the lion. And you see the lion, he's just chilling in the grass. And this antelope's just coming around with no care.
And all of a sudden, it's not a children's show anymore. There is blood everywhere. That lion's not trying to be its friend. It is trying to destroy that antelope. And if we live carelessly, if we're not willing to stand, if we're not willing to cast our cares, if we're trying to live our Christian life and our strength, we're going to become one of those casualties of war.
[33:24] Peter says there's no reason for it. Don't let your guard down. See, we don't have to fear the enemy, but what he wants to make sure is that we don't underestimate him.

Because the battle is real. Now, if Peter stopped here in verse number nine, we'd probably feel a little overwhelmed. Maybe feel a little overwhelmed. Like, preacher, this is a lot.
You know, we're to humble and we're to cast our cares and we're to resist and we're to do all these things. We're to remain alert. I mean, that's a lot. It is. But I love what Peter tells us in verse number nine. I'm verse number 10, excuse me.

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He reminds us this, number three, that we can rest in the God of all grace. I love that phrase there, but the God of all grace. Peter's just described the reality of spiritual opposition.
He's reminded us that suffering is a part of life as breathing is. But now he turns our attention away from the difficulty of our circumstances and back to the character of God.
[34:26] He said when life gets overwhelming, here's where you need to keep your eyes on, on him, on God. On the God, not the God of some grace. No, the God of all grace.

Just like we're to cast all our cares, he's got all the grace we need. He doesn't give occasional grace. He doesn't give grace that eventually runs out. No, he gives it daily. He rains it down on us when we don't deserve it.
In fact, we never deserve it. And yet he gives it. And if you've been with us throughout this series, you know that grace has been a theme of this little epistle. Peter reminded us in chapter number one that God's grace, here's what it brought us, salvation.
That God's grace enables us to endure suffering. And God, it's the same grace that's going to carry us all the way to glory. See, God doesn't start something that he can't finish.
Paul reminds us that in the book of Philippians. He said, I'm confident of these things that he which hath begun a good work in me will perform it. He will exude, he will spend out, he will pour out his grace until the day comes where we don't need it anymore.
[35:37] When we see him face to face. And as he's done multiple times, he reminds us, but the God of all grace who hath called you unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus.

He gives him one more shot in the arm and says, this is not your final destination. This world is not your home. You're just passing through. That God has called you to something far greater. Far superior than anything.
And that's what Paul told us there in Philippians. He said, I'm in a weird spot. He said, I want to be here and help you. But to be with Christ is far better. It's what we're living for.
We're living for that day and we're standing firm knowing that it's coming. And that really changes the way that we look at what we're facing. not to minimize it, not to minimize problems and difficulties that we face in our life, but he just reminds us they're not permanent.
Look what he says there. After that, you have suffered a while. Now, I know it doesn't feel like that when you're going through it. Sometimes a difficult season feels like it's never going to end.
[36:48] It's like school. It just never ends. You're sitting there looking at the clock and you're like, wasn't it 3.05, five hours ago? Sometimes that's how our life feels. That we're never going to get out of this.

But Peter's saying, listen, suffering may be part of your story, but it's just for a moment. Paul said it, this light affliction, which what Paul went through, I would not personally consider light.
But in light of eternity, it is light. In light of all that time we're going to spend with the Lord, it's just a small speck in the timeline of our own life.
And Peter gives us a wonderful promise. He says, listen, all of this is going to happen and here's how it's going to happen. That after you have suffered a while, the God, Christ Jesus, will make you perfect and establish and strengthen and settle you.
The idea of being perfect is being complete or mature. It's to equip or to restore. That God uses these trials to shape us into who he wants us to be.
[37:52] That we are to be conformed to the image of his dear son. That's what Romans 8.29 tells us. He's going to establish us to make us firm. God wants us grounded in him and in his truth so we're not tossed about with every wind and every wave that comes in our life.

Not only is he going to perfect us and establish us, he's going to strengthen us. Listen, our human frailty, we run out of strength every single day. I'm ready for bed right now.
Yeah, I mean, it's just what it is. Especially now, it's midnight out there. Listen, our strength is so finite. Our spirit may be willing but our flesh is weak.
But here's what Peter reminds us, that God is the one that strengthens you. There's going to be times in life where you just feel like, I don't really want to go on, I'm tired of trying to do the right thing. Lord, I can't do this and you're right.
Without him, you can do nothing, Jesus said. But he will strengthen you and not only will he do that, he will settle you. That's a beautiful thought. Sometimes you ever just feel that?
[38:55] You just kind of feel anxious in yourself and you just kind of can't get settled. I love when it's just almost like God just takes his hand and puts it on your shoulder. I'm here. Hey, I love you.

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Hey, you just keep pressing forward. He gives us something stable to rest on, something secure enough to withstand what life throws at us. And see, Peter says, we don't have to accomplish this. You don't have to do this. In fact, you can't do it. He'll do it. That's what the verse tells us in verse number 10. And when Peter considers everything that God has promised, there's really only one response.
Verse 11, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. Here's what amen means. So be it.
I agree with that. Maybe you're in a difficult season. Maybe you're wondering how you're going to keep going. Peter says, here's how you're going to keep going.
[39:53] The God of all grace hasn't abandoned you. He's still at work. If you're breathing, God is still working. He knows where you are. He knows how difficult it is. And he's saying, trust and rest in that grace.

Rest in the fact that God loves you. And he's proven it over and over and over again. And then we come to verse 12 through 14 and we'll look at this quickly. But we can stand firm in the grace because we're reminded this number four, that we can continue in the true grace of God.
This is not some magic crutch that we can lean on. Peter says in verse number 12, by Silvanus, a faithful brother unto you, as I suppose, I have written briefly exhorting and testifying that this is the true grace of the God wherein you stand.
We meet this man here. You probably are familiar with his name. This would be Silas. This would be the man that Paul and Silas were in prison together. And Peter refers to him as a faithful brother. Not a famous person. Not an impressive brother. A faithful brother. And Peter had men like this in his life. We see just a moment he mentions Marcus. This would be John Mark.
[41:05] The same one that Paul at the first missionary journey said this guy's no good. But God restored him and we don't have time for that but God used him in a great way. But Peter explains, he says, hey, he's been a help to me and most likely he delivered this letter to the believers.

But he's saying, here's why I wrote you. That you could stand in the true grace of God. That life comes at you fast but God's still there. God hasn't forsaken.
Keep standing. Verse 13, the church that is at Babylon, many scholars believe this is talking about Rome. That they would have been there elected together with you, saluteth you and so doth Marcus my son.
These might seem just like ordinary closing remarks but Peter is writing to believers that are facing this opposition and facing isolation and he's just saying, listen, you're not alone. The church here and Silas and Marcus and all of these believers all over the world, here's what they're doing. They're praying for you. They love you. Listen, they're going through it too but God, the God of all grace is with them as well. And he's just saying, listen, you're part of a much bigger family.
[42:14] I'm thankful for this church family but we're part of a much bigger family. I'm thankful for our missionaries around the world and that's why we read the letters on Wednesday night because we're not the only ones trying to reach the gospel.

We're not the only ones facing difficulties. No, in fact, many of our missionaries are facing far more difficult things than we are. But there are believers in other places who share the same faith and the same Savior and that's a wonderful thing that we can hold on to.
And he says there at the very end of verse 14, peace be with you all that are in Christ Jesus. Amen. I mean, after five chapters of discussing suffering and persecution and trials and spiritual warfare, here's what Peter wants to leave them with, peace.
Not because the trials have disappeared. Not because the enemy has stopped opposing them. No, here's how you can have peace. In Christ Jesus.
The world can throw everything at you but they can't take the peace away that God gives. There is a peace that passes all understanding. We can walk through things that would crush us normally but when we're in Christ, we have a peace.
[43:29] We may get a diagnosis that says, hey, there's nothing I can do but God can do something and if he doesn't, we're going to see him face to face. It changes how we look at all of these things.

See, real peace isn't found in the absence of trouble, it's found in the presence of Christ. And that's what Peter leaves them with. Saying, hey, it might still come. Difficulty might still be here but God is still in control.

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See, we began with hope, a living hope. But now he says, because of that living hope, here's what you can do. You can stand firm in the grace of God. You can plant your feet on the rock.
I don't know what the coming days will hold. I don't know what trials I might face. I don't know what trials you might face. But I know the God who's in control.
I know the God that will sustain us. So when the burdens come and they will, cast your cares on him. When the enemy attacks and he will, stand firm in the faith.
[44:34] Rest in the word of God. When the suffering seems overwhelming and most of the time it does, remember the God of all grace. The God of all comfort. And when you're tempted to give in, when you're tempted to give up and say it's not really worth it, here's what Peter says, just keep standing.

Because one day we're going to stand face to face to the Lord and it's going to be worth it all when we see him. Because one day the trials, they'll all be over. The suffering, it will end.
And our faith will become sight. And we'll stand in the presence of our Savior who gave us this living hope. I love what the Bible tells us in the book of Revelation.
We'll just end with this. Revelation chapter number 21. If I can get out of the concordance. Here's what the Bible says. And I saw a new heaven and a new earth.
For the first heaven and the first earth were passed away and there was no more sea. And I, John, saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.
[45:42] And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men and he will dwell with them and they shall be his people and God himself shall be with them and be their God.

And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes. And there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away.
And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write, for these words are true and faithful.
That's what we're looking forward to. That's what's coming our way. Doesn't take away from what we're facing, but we can stand firm knowing this will come to pass. What a day that will be.
Would you stand with me?

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